



House Armed Services Committee

Global War on Terrorism Update

September 16, 2003

Iraq Update

- A Coalition explosive ordnance disposal team of Reserve airmen and Latvian troops has now collected and destroyed more than one million pounds of explosives.
- This morning, a U.S. bomb disposal team detonated explosives that Iraqi police found near the Jordanian and Tunisian embassies.
- Yesterday in Tikrit, members of the Army's 4th Infantry Division arrested seven men suspected of helping finance attacks and organizing cells of resistance against Coalition forces.
- In one recent 24-hour period, U.S. soldiers, along with Iraqi police, civil defense corps and border guards, staged seven raids against bomb-making facilities around Tikrit. They detained 48 people and shut down two workshops, seizing materials used in constructing explosive devices, and a variety of machine-guns, rifles and munitions.

Philippines Update

- Some 1,500 Marines from the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit based in Okinawa arrived yesterday for a weeklong series of bilateral military drills. The troops will conduct marine-surveillance exercises as part of counterterrorism efforts against the growing threats of piracy, smuggling and drug trafficking.

To Quote

- *"We are not waiting for further attacks on our citizens. We are striking our enemies before they can strike us again. Wars are won on the offensive - and America and its friends are staying on the offensive."* – President Bush's remarks at Fort Stewart, Georgia, 9/12/03.

Of Note

- **Nearly two-thirds say war with Iraq was part of the war against terrorism.** By 66% to 32% margin, Americans consider war with Iraq part of the war against terrorism (ABC/Washington Post). By 61% to 30% margin, Americans agree military action in Iraq and Afghanistan is necessary to protect Americans from having to fight terrorists on U.S. soil (Fox News).
- **Overwhelming margins approve of President Bush's handling of terrorism, military spending, and the situation in Iraq.** Americans approve of the President's handling of terrorism by a 70% to 27% margin (ABC/Washington Post), of military spending by a 60% to 39% margin (ABC/Washington Post), and of the situation in Iraq by a 54% to 38% margin (Fox News).
- **Nearly three-fourths support U.S. military presence in Iraq.** Americans support the current U.S. military presence in Iraq by a 71% to 27% margin, virtually unchanged from July's 74% to 25% margin (ABC/Washington Post).

Afghanistan Update

- U.S., Italian, Romanian and Afghan soldiers recently captured tons of explosives, including more than 20,000 pieces of ordnance, and unearthed several secret caves operated by Taliban and Al Qaeda insurgents in southeastern Afghanistan.
- On Saturday, in an eastern province of Afghanistan, guerrillas opened fire with mortars and machine guns on American soldiers before retreating toward the Pakistan border. Soldiers from the 10th Mountain Division were patrolling near a U.S. base at Shkin in Paktika province, when they came under attack and responded with small arms and artillery for about an hour. There were no American casualties.
- Fifteen Taliban fighters, reportedly including Mullah Abdul Rahim, a senior Taliban commander, were killed by U.S.-led forces in the Maruf district on Sunday. There were no U.S. or friendly casualties. Rahim controlled Taliban guerrilla forces in southern Afghanistan, where attacks have risen sharply in recent weeks.

Did You Know?

- By defeating opposition forces in Iraq, we are allowing a democratic, stable country to emerge – free of terrorist cells and the means to harm us. A strong infrastructure is already emerging – in fact:
 - While the independent central bank of Germany took three years to set-up after World War II, a central bank was established in Iraq in just two months.
 - A police force in Germany was established after 14 months, compared to only two months in Iraq.
 - A new currency in Germany took three years – but just 75 days in Iraq.
 - The new cabinet in Germany took 14 months. Iraq's new cabinet had its first meeting after four months.

Talking Points

- Saddam Hussein's regime advocated terrorism, financed terrorism and harbored terrorists. By liberating Iraq and defeating terrorists currently entering the country, the world is a safer place.
- We are successfully assisting Iraqis as they take more responsibility for their own security – there are now more than 55,000 Iraqis participating in their country's security efforts.
- U.S. forces are rebuilding Iraq while, on a parallel track, freeing the country from the scourge of terrorists who could otherwise strike-out at America.